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LETTER DATED 6 DECEMBER 1996 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF GHANA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to refer to the Security Council's current consideration of candidates for the position of Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Upon instructions from my Government, I have great pleasure in nominating for the consideration of the Council a distinguished citizen of my country, and a committed international civil servant, Mr. Kofi Annan.

Mr. Annan, currently Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, is already well known to members of the Security Council and the United Nations membership at large for his proved record of competence and trustworthiness in more than 30 years with the United Nations, both at Headquarters and in the field. With considerable experience in the administrative, political and operational aspects of this Organization, Mr. Annan is a highly rated international manager and diplomat.

Mr. Annan is singularly placed to lead the United Nations in all the priority tasks of the new Secretary-General, including organizational reform, streamlining the budget, managing the human resources of the Organization, providing political direction to the many peacekeeping operations and field missions of the United Nations, and ensuring that the challenges of development remain on the world agenda. He is the only candidate who has had personal experience during his career with United Nations management, budget, human resources, peacekeeping, refugees and other field missions. He is a proud son of Africa, who has lived, studied and worked in Ghana, Ethiopia and Egypt, and is sensitive to the problems faced by developing countries. He has also distinguished himself in Europe and North America, most recently heading the United Nations efforts and coordination with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in the former Yugoslavia during the particularly sensitive and difficult transition period following the Dayton Accords.

Mr. Annan works effectively in both English and French, having studied at the Institut universitaire de hautes études internationales in Geneva as well as at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Macalester College.

I attach hereto a biographical note on Mr. Annan.

It is the hope of the Government of Ghana that the Council will give favourable consideration to the candidature of Mr. Kofi Annan and recommend to the General Assembly his appointment as Secretary-General of the United Nations with effect from 1 January 1997.

I should be grateful if you would bring the present letter to the attention of the members of the Security Council and circulate it as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) J. B. WILMOT
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE: KOFI ATTA ANNAN

Kofi Annan is Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations at the United Nations, a post to which he returned in March 1996, after having served as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to the former Yugoslavia and the Special Envoy to NATO throughout the transition period which followed the Dayton Accords. He was originally appointed Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations on 1 March 1993, a year after his appointment as Assistant Secretary-General in the same department.

Prior to these posts, Mr. Annan was employed by the United Nations in a number of other senior capacities. These included the position of Assistant Secretary-General for Programme Planning, Budget and Finance and Controller of the United Nations Organization. Following the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq in 1990, Mr. Annan was sent by the Secretary-General to Iraq to help see what could be done to improve the situation on the ground and to facilitate the repatriation of over 900 international staff. While there, Mr. Annan became engaged in negotiations for the release of Western hostages and in bringing attention to the plight of over 500,000 Asians stranded in Kuwait and Iraq. Subsequently, he led the United Nations team negotiating with Iraq on the possible sale of oil for purchases of humanitarian aid.

Earlier, Mr. Annan had held concurrently the positions of Assistant Secretary-General in the Office of Human Resources Management and Security Coordinator for the United Nations system, following appointments as Director of the Budget and as Deputy Director of Administration and Head of Personnel in the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. In all, he has devoted more than 30 years to the United Nations, serving in places as diverse as Addis Ababa, Cairo, Geneva, Ismailia and New York.

A national of Ghana, Kofi Annan returned to his home country during the period 1974-1976 as the Managing Director of the Ghana Tourist Development Company, serving concurrently on its Board and on the Ghana Tourist Control Board.

Apart from his official duties, Mr. Annan has long been involved in the areas of education and development and the welfare and protection of international staff. He is currently on the Boards of Trustees of Macalester College in St. Paul, Minnesota and the Institute for the Future in Menlo Park, California. He was for many years Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the United Nations International School in New York, and he served as a Governor of the International School in Geneva from 1981 to 1983. Within the United Nations, Mr. Annan has contributed to the work of the Appointment and Promotion Board and the Senior Review Group (both of which he chaired), to the Administrative, Management and Financial Board, to the Secretary-General's Task Force for Peacekeeping, and to the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund.

Kofi Annan, who speaks English, French and several African languages, studied at the University of Science and Technology at Kumasi and completed his undergraduate work in economics at Macalester College, which awarded him its Trustee Distinguished Service Award in 1994, in honour of his more than 30 years of service to the international community. He undertook graduate studies in economics at the Institut universitaire de hautes études internationales in Geneva. As a 1971-1972 Sloan Fellow at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, he received a Master of Science degree in Management. In June 1996, Cedar Crest College in Allentown, Pennsylvania, awarded him the honorary degree of Doctor of Public Service.

Mr. Annan and his wife, Nane, live in New York. They have three children.